

**TOWN OF ELLINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

**7:00 PM
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2004**

**TOWN HALL ANNEX
57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT**

I. Call to Order

Chair Cleary called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. Also attending were commissioners Sanko, Peck, Sherman, Olmstead and Santini and Town Planner Matthew Davis. Absent were commissioners Vartanian and Luginbuhl.

II. Public Comments (none)

III. New Business.

1. Discussion of Farm Initiatives.

Chair Cleary gave an update on current efforts, including a meeting he, Mr. Davis and Mr. Milanovich had regarding concepts for Route 83 development and development at the airport. Mr. Davis also noted that Mr. Milanovich has been working with the Agriculture Department at the State to link up local farmers with prospective clients, including the State prison, Town Board of Education and others.

IV. Unfinished Business

1. Business Survey-Update

Mr. Davis noted that he will be delegating this to Reanna Goodreau, at the request of the First Selectmen. Mr. Davis will meet with Mrs. Goodreau when she returns from vacation to discuss preparing a draft.

2. CEDAS: Camera Friendly Communities-Update

Commissioner Sanko noted that she has taken some photos of representative areas of Town. She suggested that it might be necessary to assign another EDC member to this task, noting that business commitments have kept her from moving forward.

3. Tax Abatement Policies and Procedures-Update

Mr. Davis noted that this will also be a task assigned to Mrs. Goodreau and that he has drafted some revisions to the application form. He will discuss these with her when she returns from vacation. Mr. Davis and Chair Cleary provided a brief overview of the current procedures, and the Chair requested that the Town Attorney review the revised policy to make certain it complied with changes in State statute.

V. Administrative Business

1. "CenterEdge" Discussions and Ad Hoc Committee

Mr. Davis noted that he had very recently become aware that the Board of Selectmen agreed to have Board member Stupinski create an ad hoc committee to coordinate with CenterEdge, with the intent of gaining support for a community meeting this Fall, where CenterEdge would present the findings of its report "MetroPatterns." Mr. Davis provided a brief overview of that report and handed out information on CenterEdge. He also noted that it was his understanding that the Board of Selectmen "endorsed" the concept of a community meeting presentation by CenterEdge.

Mr. Davis supported the sharing of information for educational purposes, but also felt this discussion would involve matters of great concern to the EDC, PZC and others, therefore, they should at least be made aware.

The Commission requested that the Planner invite Mr. Stupinski to attend the next EDC meeting to provide more information. Mr. Davis has asked the First Selectmen's office for copies of the ad hoc committee's agendas and minutes.

2. Approval of July 14, 2004 Minutes

Motion Peck, seconded Olmstead and voted unanimously to approve the July 14, 2004 meeting minutes.

3. Discussion of Build Out Report from the First Selectman

Mr. Davis noted that the First Selectman had informed him that he would request Boards and Agencies return comments to the First Selectman on this report by some date certain. Mr. Davis has not received any such formal request, with the exception of a copy of the

cover letter the Selectmen's office had sent with the initial transmittal of the report, which had been sent directly from the Selectmen's office to the Board members.

There was considerable discussion regarding the adopted project work program. Members understood that the process was supposed to have the Steering Committee refer the final report to the Board of Selectmen (which was done in April of 2004), and from that point, the Board was to review the report and its recommendations, and then send suggestions to the various agencies regarding which initiatives in the report should be pursued. The prior First Selectman had also noted that the Board of Selectmen would likely have at least one community meeting on the final report prior to sending suggestions to the land use and other agencies.

It is not clear to the EDC what the Board of Selectmen would like them to do, and the EDC was disappointed that the approved work program was not followed, but they agreed to place the matter on the September agenda for review and will forward comments to the Board of Selectmen as requested. The Planner apologized, and while he shares the EDC's disappointment, he did not feel it was his prerogative to direct the Board of Selectmen in regards to the process.

Mr. Davis also noted that as he has meetings most Monday evenings, he is often unable to attend the Board of Selectmen meetings, and such was the case the evening that Board reviewed the Build Out Report. It was Mr. Davis's understanding that the Board's review that evening focused almost exclusively on the concept of a "design review board." He noted that the Board has in fact created an ad hoc DRB, has appointed members to that ad hoc committee, and gave it a broad scope of duties.

The EDC members were not aware of this, and have not been advised by the Selectmen that this was being actively pursued. Mr. Davis noted that the DRB has no staff, no budget and has not met yet as a group, therefore they have no Chair, procedures or standards. Mr. Davis also noted that in December 2003, at the First Selectmen's request, he had provided a memo to him outlining a wide variety of "threshold" issues that needed to be considered, debated and resolved before creating a DRB. He understood that that memo had not been shared with Board of Selectmen members at the time of their discussion on the Build Out Report, but that Mr. Charter had received a copy by request to the First Selectman.

In that same December 2003 memo, Mr. Davis had noted the need to address how potential design review procedures and standards would affect policies and practices of significant concern to the EDC.

Finally, Mr. Davis noted that the First Selectman has asked him to contact the DRB members to have them on the next PZC agenda for a discussion. Mr. Davis has discussed that request with the Chair of the PZC, who has asked that the PZC have an opportunity as a group to discuss the request first, before contacting the DRB.

As a result of what appear to be significant unresolved issues with respect to the scope, staffing, funding and operations of the DRB, Mr. Davis has requested he be able to discuss these with the Board of Selectmen. That discussion has been tabled by that Board to their September meeting.

4. Correspondence

Receipt noted.

VI. Adjournment

Motion Peck, seconded by Sherman, and unanimous in favor to adjourn at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matthew J. Davis
Town Planner

August 20, 2004